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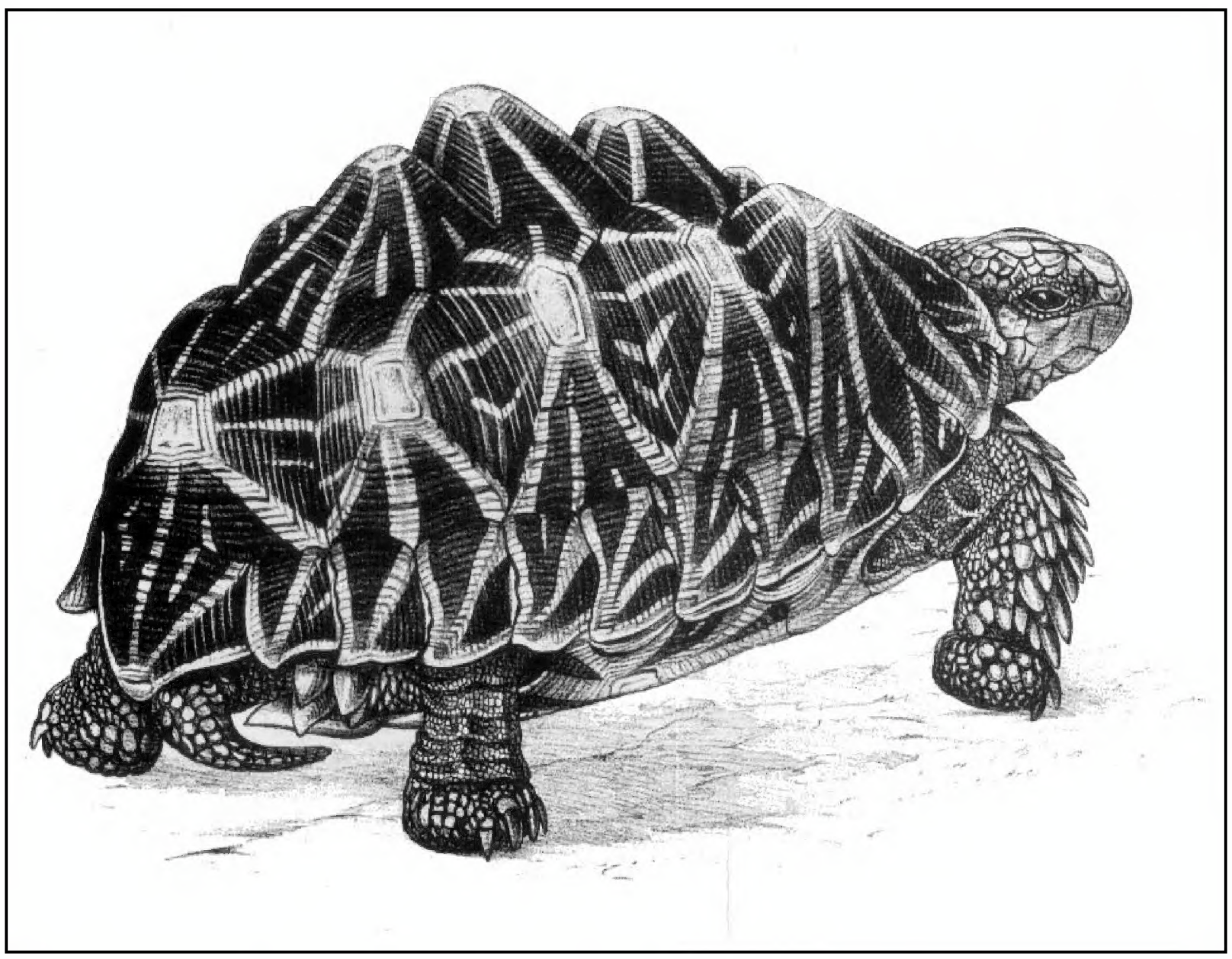

BULLETIN OF THE CHICAGO HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY
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Note on the Reproductive Cycle of Cope's Ameiva, *Ameiva bifrontata* (Squamata: Teiidae), from Peru

Stephen R. Goldberg
Biology Department, Whittier College
PO Box 634
Whittier, CA 90608
sgoldberg@whittier.edu

Abstract

Histological examination of Peruvian *Ameiva bifrontata* gonads from opposite ends of the year (late autumn and late spring) revealed reproductive activity during both periods suggesting an extended reproductive cycle. Mean clutch size was 2.0. Comparisons are made with the reproductive cycles of other Peruvian lizards and species of *Ameiva* from Central America.

Cope's ameiva, *Ameiva bifrontata*, is known from northern South America (northern Peru, Colombia, Venezuela) and some Caribbean islands (Islas Los Testigos, Margarita, Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao) (Uetz and Hallermann, 2010). León and Ruiz (1971) reported on reproduction in *A. bifrontata* from Estado Sucre, Venezuela. The purpose of this note is to examine reproductive tissues of Peruvian *A. bifrontata* taken from opposite ends of the year (late autumn and late spring) to characterize the timing of the reproductive cycle of this species as part of a survey of reproduction in Peruvian lizards.

A sample of 14 male (mean snout–vent length [SVL] = 67.3 mm ± 13.8 SD, range: 48–93 mm) and 14 female (mean SVL = 64.6 mm ± 9.2 SD, range: 50–82 mm) *A. bifrontata* from Peru collected in November 1968 (n = 24) and June 1976 (n = 4) were borrowed from the herpetology collection of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (LACM), Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

The following *A. bifrontata* from Peru were examined: Amazonas Department: LACM 76890; Cajamarca Department: LACM 76860-76868, 76871, 76873, 76874, 76879-76889, 122806-122809.

For histological examination, the left testis was removed from males and the left ovary was removed from females. Enlarged ovarian follicles (> 5 mm length) or oviductal eggs were counted. Slides were stained with Harris hematoxylin, followed by eosin counterstain (Presnell and Schreibman, 1997). Histology slides are deposited in LACM. An unpaired t-test was used to compare male and female body sizes (SVL) (Instat vers 3.0b, Graphpad Software, San Diego, CA).

There was no significant difference between mean SVL length of males versus females (unpaired t-test, $t = 0.613$, $df = 26$, $P = 0.545$). Two stages were present in the testicular cycle: (1) recrudescence, in which there is a proliferation of germ cells in preparation for the upcoming period of sperm formation. Recrudescence may be subdivided into an early stage in which numerous spermatogonial divisions are present and primary spermatocytes are present. In late recrudescence, secondary spermatocytes and spermatids are common as well as an occasional spermatid. Nine males from November and two from June were undergoing spermiogenesis. The smallest reproductively active male (spermiogenesis) measured 28 mm SVL (LACM 122806) and was collected in June. One male from November (LACM 76864), which measured 54 mm SVL, exhibited early recrudescence. Two males from November (LACM 76860) SVL 48 mm SVL and (LACM 76867) 56 mm SVL were both in late recrudesence. All three were classified as subadults because it is not known at what body size they would have commenced spermiogenesis.

Four stages were present in the ovarian cycle: (1) quiescent (resting) with no yolk deposition; (2) early yolk deposition with basophilic vitellogenic yolk granules scattered in the cytoplasm; (3) enlarged ovarian follicles (> 4 mm) prior to ovulation; (4) oviductal eggs in the oviducts. Mean clutch size was 2.0 (n = 5). I examined 7 mature females from November: 2 (quiescent); 1 (early yolk deposition); 4 (enlarged follicles > 4 mm length), and one from June (oviductal eggs). The two smallest reproductively active females were collected in November and both measured 68 mm SVL. One (LACM 76889) exhibited early yolk deposition. The second (LACM 76886) contained enlarged ovarian follicles, > 4 mm length. Five subadult females from November and one from June contained quiescent ovaries with no yolk deposition (mean SVL = 55.5 mm ± 4.5 SD, range: 50–63 mm).

Leôn and Ruiz (1971) reported males and females of *A. bifrontata* from Venezuela appeared to be reproductively active throughout the year. Mean clutch size was estimated between 1.70 to 1.90 eggs. The presence of both reproductively active males and females of Peruvian *A. bifrontata* from November and June also suggests an extended reproductive cycle. Thus it appears *A. bifrontata* exhibits extended reproduction in both Venezuela and Peru. Other species of *Ameiva* from Central America also exhibited extended reproductive cycles (Goldberg, 2009).

Goldberg (2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2009) in a series of papers on reproduction in lizards from Peru, similarly found evidence of prolonged breeding cycles as did Sherbrooke (1975) for *Potamites* (as *Neusticurus*) *ecpleopus*. With 178 lizard species known in Peru (Lehr, 2002) examination of other species are warranted before the diversity of reproductive cycles exhibited by Peruvian lizards can be ascertained.

Acknowledgments

I thank Christine Thacker (LACM) for permission to examine *A. bifrontata*.

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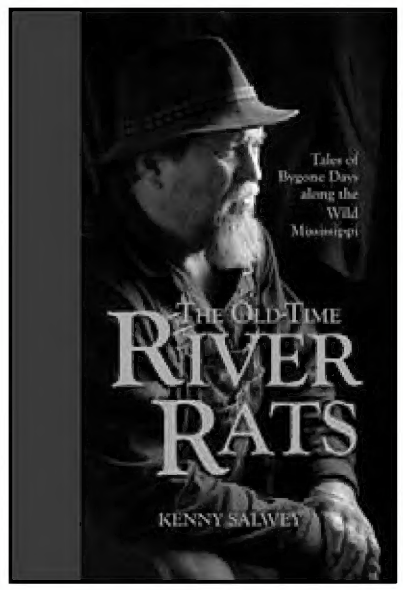
Book Review: *The Old-time River Rats: Tales of Bygone Days along the Wild Mississippi* by Kenny Salwey

2009. Voyageur Press, St. Paul, Minnesota. 240 pp. ISBN-13: 9780760334973. Hardcover $20.00*

* This and many other books and products are available at Amazon.com. If you first visit the CHS website, www.chicagoherp.org, and then use the Amazon icon you find there to enter Amazon's site, any purchases you make will help to support the CHS.

Philip A. Cochran
Biology Department
Saint Mary's University
700 Terrace Heights
Winona, MN 55987

This is the third in a series of books featuring the stories of Kenny Salwey, who has achieved regional fame in the upper Mississippi River valley of Wisconsin and Minnesota as the "Last River Rat." The first two volumes (Bestul and Salwey, 2001; Salwey, 2005) were also reviewed in these pages (Cochran, 2002, 2007).



In his latest book, Kenny Salwey's memories of some of his favorite characters are organized into three sections: "River Rats," "Old Dogs" and "Hill Folk." He describes the way activities such as hay making and threshing were accomplished during the old days when horses and humans supplied the power, and he recounts excursions after morels, trout, catfish, and ducks. As in his previous books, there are passing references to frogs, turtles, and snakes. Mention is made of trapping snapping turtles to sell for their meat. They were also pulled with hooks on poles from their hibernacula during the winter. Readers of this bulletin might be especially interested in a ten-page section about hunting timber rattlesnakes, in which the author drops the names of some of the region's prominent bounty hunters of the past. As in his first book, he supports the repeal of the bounty and ascribes the plight of the timber rattlesnake to habitat loss through invasion of goat prairies by woody vegetation. He does not mention habitat destruction through residential construction or mortality resulting from encounters with humans or their vehicles.

Sometimes it is easy to imagine that people today are more enlightened about environmental issues and more tolerant of creatures like spiders and snakes. It is good to be reminded that some folks were sometimes tolerant in the old days as well. Kenny Salwey writes in one chapter of his bachelor Uncle Whimpy, who lived with his twin sister and their aging mother in a small ramshackle cottage. The elderly woman, who rarely spoke a word in English, allowed a five-foot bull snake to live in their root cellar for years because it helped keep down the mice, and the family cried when they found it dead on the highway.

I enjoyed this work. Personal preferences may vary, but I'd rate this book as comparable to the first in the series and better than the second. The organizational approach taken by the author and his selection of stories have ensured that it does not read like a rehash of his previous efforts. Here's hoping Kenny Salwey has even more stories to tell in the future.

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What You Missed at the July Meeting

John Archer
j-archer@sbcglobal.net

I've met Mike Pingleton at a few CHS meetings. I've read some of Mike's posts on the Field Herp Forum (www.fieldherpforum.com). I've spent time wandering through his excellent web site (www.pingleton.com). Though I couldn't attend, I was intrigued with the title of his Midwest Herpetological Symposium presentation "Field Herping around the Calendar" because I was pretty sure that would be limited to Midwest field herping (I know that Mike has herped successfully even in below-freezing weather). But I had not had the opportunity to actually talk with Mike before his appearance at the July meeting. I've wanted to know him better for awhile. Sometimes I've been disappointed when finally there's a chance to know someone I've been tracking from a distance. I certainly wasn't when I finally had the chance to pester Mike with questions and listen to some of his stories. And his presentation was great.

Photograph of Mike Pingleton by Dick Buchholz.

I know that some of us pursue this hobby by breeding or buying the latest exotic morph, selecting animals like one might select a pedigreed dog, and thinking that wallowing around in dirt and leaves is about as appealing as cleaning cages after a two week vacation. While I don't share that particular view, I do understand it. That's one of the many good things about our peculiar interest. One can approach it from several different directions. And perhaps the title of Mike Pingleton's July presentation "Jewels in the Crown, Unique and Memorable Field Herping Experiences" caused some of those individuals to refrain from showing up at the meeting. They missed out. Even if you never intend to spend twenty minutes flipping a huge pile of tin in the early morning while totally exhausted after driving the roads all night only to discover a few small worms and a very large spider, you would have enjoyed Mike's talk.

He started by explaining that rather than give a travelogue about one field trip, he would talk about the highlights of several trips, rather loosely catalogued under the headings of Mysteries and Surprises, New Directions, Quests and Pilgrimages, Underlying Themes, and The Company You Keep. I was ready and anxious to listen to a travelogue, but this spin promised a more fascinating look at field herping and Mike's forty-plus years of experience.

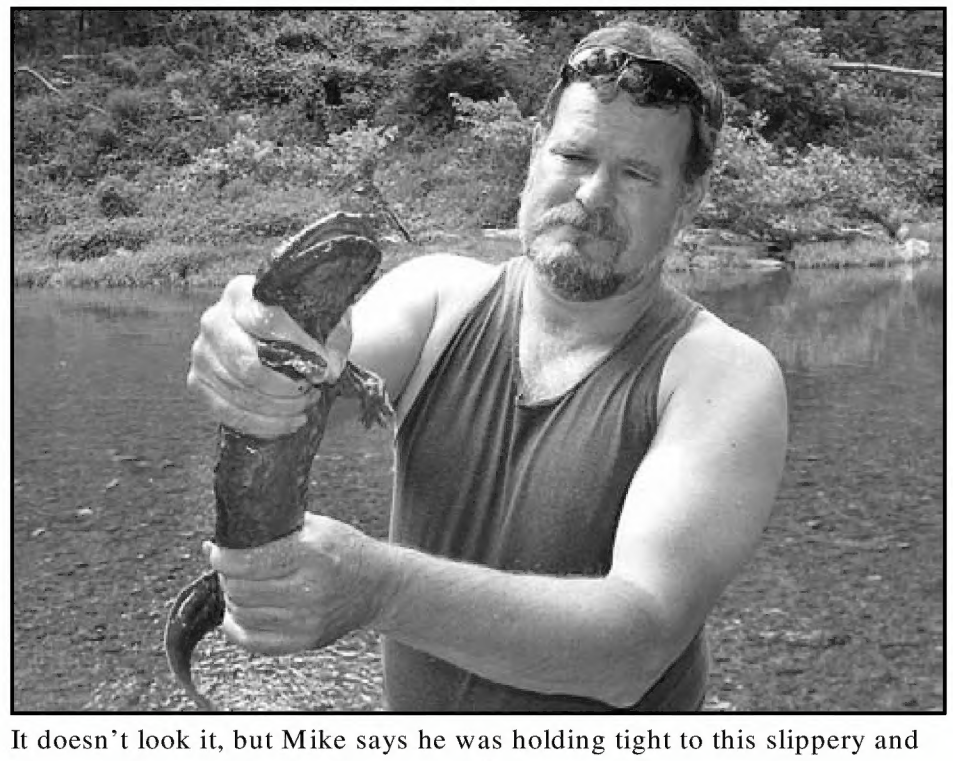
He started with some timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) photos under the Mysteries and Surprises category. Mike confessed the average herper's problem of only observing these creatures in transitional situations when they are merely moving from one spot to another, leaving little insight into how they lead most of their lives. He was lucky enough to be involved in a radio telemetry study a friend of his was conducting. Photos of snakes in "tree station" poses and Mike using the antenna to locate them captured our attention. Mike admitted that participating in the study was some of the most fun he'd had. Exposure to the snakes in habitats and situations he would normally have not observed has made him more adept at finding and photographing them. His pictures backed up his claim.

Mike's reputation and many friends allowed him to accompany another academic field study of hellbenders (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*). Looking like the perfect activity for a hot summer day, we saw pictures of a small group in a small river outfitted in masks and snorkels with nets and measuring devices and a great shot of Mike holding one of the salamanders. Apparently hellbender surveys require quite a few participants and organizational skills that assign everyone a particular role with titles like lifter, groper and netter. Labeling this under New Directions, Mike explained how this adventure led him to an interest in underwater photography, which led him into the purchase of a new camera. From the photos we saw of later prey, I think Mike will put it to exceptional use. Baby turtles are cute above and below the waterline, and underwater photos of streamside salamanders (*Ambystoma barbouri*) and their eggs, toad (*Anaxyrus americanus*) amplexus, and an eastern spiny softshell (*Apalone spinifera spinifera*) were fascinating.

Mysteries and Surprises resurfaced with a trip to a small Illinois sand prairie. Pictures of butterflies and hog-nosed snakes (*Heterodon nasicus*) preceded a picture of an ornate box turtle (*Terrapene ornata*). That picture was followed by an-

A timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) in the "tree station" pose, ready for any prey that comes around either side of the tree or down the trunk.

Ridge-nosed rattlers (*Crotalus willardi*) are just pretty.

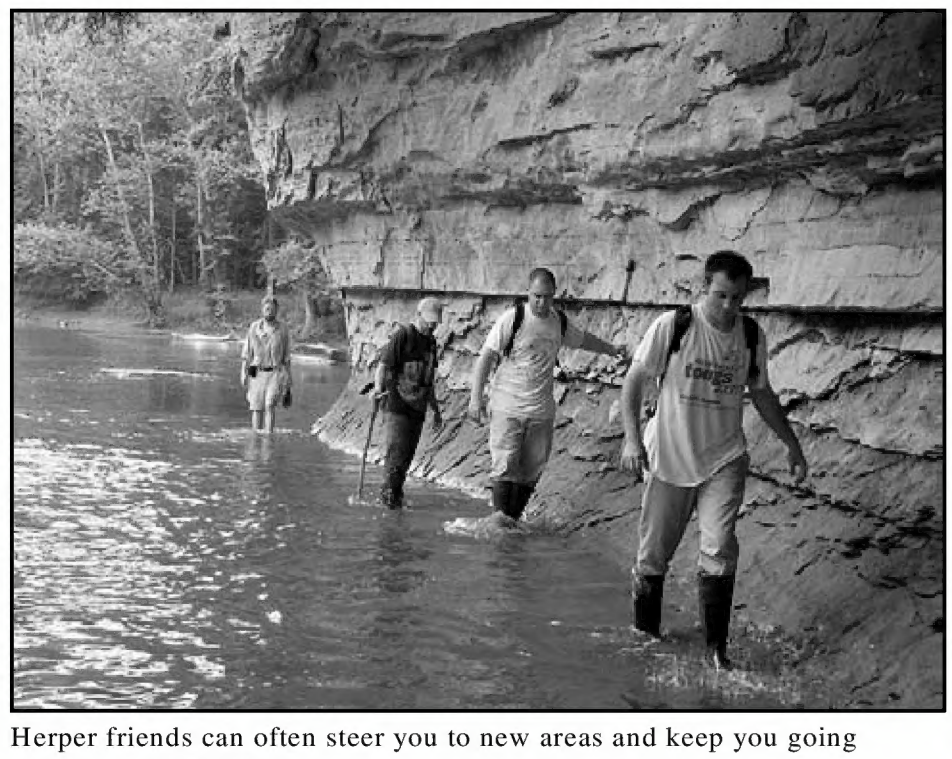


It doesn't look it, but Mike says he was holding tight to this slippery and strong hellbender (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*).

One of the photos from Mike's "photos of calling frogs" list—green treefrog (*Hyla cinerea*).

Another on the "calling frogs" list. Mike labeled this, "*Bufo valliceps*. Or *Bufo nebulifer*. Or *Anxyrus valliceps*." It's now called *Ollotis nebulifer*. In any case it's still a Gulf Coast toad.

I don' t think I've ever seen a picture of a toad I didn't like. Red-spotted toad (*Anaxyrus punctatus*).



Herper friends can often steer you to new areas and keep you going when you might otherwise quit.

other of the turtles. And another. After finding over a dozen of them at all stages of growth, Mike wondered how this small patch of land could be supporting a thriving population when these turtles are disappearing from much of the rest of the state, even in areas that should be good habitat. Can this population be used to reestablish populations in other areas? A day of what could have been relatively routine herping led to some very interesting and complex questions.

A week later Mike targeted racers (*Coluber constrictor*) at the same prairie, looking for them in the piles of dead brush dotting the prairie from shrub eradication efforts. He found a gravid female garter (*Thamnophis sirtalis*) at the first pile, and another adult female at a second. Finding more of these associations, Mike began sensing a trend and linked this to a herp trip he'd taken earlier to an Indiana forest. Mike noted that adult female garters were closely linked to tree falls in forest and prairie. He questioned what the connection between tree falls and female garters might be, and wants to do a literature search to see if this Underlying Theme has been documented. While he talked, we got to look at great pictures of lizards and garters and habitats.

Many of us have dreams of visiting certain destinations, and Mike is no exception. He called the trips to these spots Pilgrimages, and opened this section with a shot of a no trespassing sign of the Okeetee Club. He talked of the excitement and challenge in exploring geography and habitats you've only heard or read about, looking for both the rare and the common which one had never experienced. Mike had excellent photos of Okeetee eastern diamondbacks (*Crotalus adamanteus*) and rainbow snakes (*Farancia erytrogramma*), weird-headed (to Midwest eyes) racers and gorgeous live oak rat snakes (*Pantherophis spiloides*), and sandy pine woods and bottomland swamps from his South Carolina travels. His pilgrimages to Arizona have yielded photos of topography that sharply contrasts with his home in Illinois covered with flat corn and soybean fields as far as the eye can see, and, of course, the exotic animals that cannot be encountered back home. Western diamondbacks (*Crotalus atrox*) and ridge-nosed rattlers (*Crotalus willardi*) graced the screen, along with a Ramsey Canyon leopard frog (*Lithobates subaquavocalis*) and a beautiful desert gopher tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*).

With a picture from the field guide shown on the screen, Mike related how the picture had stimulated a lifelong desire to find a buttermilk racer. Finally acting upon this desire, Mike took us on his Quest for *Coluber constrictor anthicus*. Mike defines a quest as rather like a pilgrimage for a species rather than a place. The audience was regaled with photos of his bycatch including an Osage copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix phaeogaster*) and a western pigmy rattlesnake (*Sistrurus miliarius streckeri*), a Texas ratsnake (*Pantherophis obsoletus*) and a southern copperhead (*A. c. contortrix*). The difficulty of a quest was emphasized with views of much tin and trash to be flipped and obviously hot and tired participants, but the goal was finally achieved and Mike allowed us to lay eyes on a buttermilk that could have been used as a model for that early

The fulfillment of one of Mike's quests, a buttermilk racer (*Coluber constrictor anthicus*)

illustration in the field guide. I think that the audience was nearly as excited as Mike when we finally learned that his quest had ended in success.

Mike keeps a life list with photos of almost everything he's seen on his web site, but he's got other lists that differ somewhat from the usual. With the Underlying Theme of photographing calling frogs, Mike presented night scenes and water scenes and night-water scenes of calling frogs, with some telling narrative of the miseries involved in acquiring them and the joys in the success. Excellent and evocative photographs of uncommon frogs such as the Illinois chorus frog (*Pseudacris illinoensis*) and common frogs such as the spring peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*) belied the trials involved in capturing the difficult images that require not only perseverance and timing but also luck.

I think that Mike ended on a perfect note, for his last category was The Company You Keep. All of the last pictures were of people, some in the "everyone-get-together-for-the-picture" pose, many candid pictures of people looking silly, and many photos of people being deliberately silly. Mike spoke of the impact of herping with friends, of sharing the chores and joys, of having someone to urge you on and take you places you may not have gone. He showed pictures of wetsuits and wet boots, tree huggers and tent campers. Always he spoke with obvious respect and caring about the herpers with whom he has happily shared his exploits. And always his wit and gentle sarcasms included himself. I don't doubt that he will share many more trips with many others. He's too good a guy and too good a herper not to attract a lot of followers. And his thoughtfully different travelogue shows him to be inquisitive and intelligent in the field. I'm sure his presentation has not encouraged everyone to slog through swamps or strain to lift rocks the size of Volkswagens, but I'm sure that it conveyed why some of us do. I would have been happy if Mike had given us a "simple" travelogue, but he gave us much more.

This photo was taken by Dick Buchholz at the July meeting. Mike Dloogatch liked the photo and wanted me to write a caption for it. I like the photo too, but I'm going to take advantage of the opportunity to write a little more than just a caption. I think this picture reveals much about the meetings, your society, and why many of us belong to the Chicago Herpetological Society.

Dan Nathan, the "Iguana Man," frequently brings some of his iguanas to the meetings. This month Dan mentioned to me that he was having a reunion. Most or all of the iguanas had connections to the people who were in the room. Some had been rescued, some adopted, some just found. We still avoid taking in iguanas, but Dan has certainly helped us place many that would otherwise simply die. Your society doesn't have a formal rescue service, but we do have an adoptions program. If someone wants to give up an animal, we'll attempt to find a home for it. We don't give it to just anyone. The recipient must demonstrate the ability to properly care for it to our satisfaction. Linda Malawy puts in an extraordinary amount of time and effort coordinating this as the official adoptions chairperson, and Bob Bavirsha also spends large amounts of time and money trying to place reptiles and amphibians that are no longer wanted. Many of you do this on your own, because you feel that these animals are just as valuable as dogs or cats. With reptiles and amphibians still growing rapidly in popularity, this need will unfortunately be increasing.

One of our primary missions is education, and from the looks on these kids' faces, you can tell that the animals fascinate them. Sure, they came to the meeting so they're already interested, but for those of us who have done shows for the public, this scene is not unusual. At the shows we work we reach people who have rarely thought about these animals and may actually be terrified of them. A properly conducted outreach can steer people towards a good pet and away from others. We're frequently involved in not only changing people's attitudes towards our animals, but also helping them overcome fears and boost their self-confidence. It's not intensive psychology, but it's immensely satisfying to interact with those who know little of these animals. You know this if you've done a show or worked at ReptileFest. If you haven't, why not?

Another thing I'd like to mention about the above photograph is the activity. Look at the background. Members and nonmembers are talking and busily involved with each other. News is being passed. Information is being disseminated. Friendships are being started and continued. Maybe the quality of our speakers is what causes many of you to attend, but certainly the congregation of people who share your interests has to be a part of the attraction. Thirty years ago a society such as ours was the best and frequently the only way to get any information about these animals. That's not the case now. Anyone with access to the internet can find all the facts they need to properly care for their bearded dragon or ball python. But they won't have the extensive knowledge gained from years of experience that many of our members have. They'll have to figure out what are the good web sites and bad web sites on their own. They'll miss out on cutting-edge techniques and research that can take a while to filter into general distribution. They'll miss out on sharing their experiences with people who are also enthusiastic about these animals.

I know that many of you can't attend the meetings. I do feel sorry for you, but via email or other means, as part of this society you have access to people who have the knowledge to solve some of your problems or introduce you to people who can. You can let us know of speakers that are good, web sites that are worth looking at, and even contribute to those emails I occasionally send out. If you visit our area, you'll have friends to show you around. A society is community, fellowship, camaraderie, friendship; all of those sappy words that always have the inspiring sound track playing when you hear them. You are a member of one of the best. Get involved. Enjoy it.

Herpetology 2010

In this column the editorial staff presents short abstracts of herpetological articles we have found of interest. This is not an attempt to summarize all of the research papers being published; it is an attempt to increase the reader's awareness of what herpetologists have been doing and publishing. The editor assumes full responsibility for any errors or misleading statements.

HERPETOFAUNA OF THE RINCON MOUNTAINS

A. D. Flesch et al. [2010, The Southwestern Naturalist 55(2): 240-253] estimated species richness, distribution, and relative abundance of herpetofauna across a 1,800-m elevation gradient in the Rincon Mountains and compared patterns of occurrence of species with other mountain ranges in southeastern Arizona. The authors detected 2,378 individuals of 40 species during 596 h of visual-encounter surveys, and 1,793 individuals including six additional species incidentally during 2001 and 2002. Based on probabilistic methods, as many as 57 species likely are present in the Rincon Mountains. This number is consistent with past observations and expert opinion. Species richness declined with increasing elevation. Relative abundance declined with increasing elevation for seven species, increased with elevation for three species, and was greatest at middle elevations for three species. The Rincon Mountains lack some species that occur in nearby mountain ranges of similar size and elevation, possibly due to climatic or historical factors. This study was the first detailed inventory of herpetofauna in the Rincon Mountains.

NEW MAP TURTLE SPECIES

J. R. Ennen et al. [2010, Chelonian Conservation and Biology 9(1):98-113] note that cryptic or undescribed species pose a major problem in conservation biology. Managing multiple unresolved taxa collectively as a single entity could precipitate the loss of unrecognized genetic variation and unique populations and, possibly, lead to extinction of undiscovered or unrecognized taxa. In contrast to other species in its clade, the Pascagoula map turtle (*Graptemys gibbonsi*), as recognized up to now, is not confined to a single major river system (or a cluster formed by a major river and adjacent minor drainages) but occurs in two major river systems, the Pearl and Pascagoula rivers. The authors analyzed *G. gibbonsi* samples from both rivers for the first time in a morphological and molecular assessment of the taxonomic status of this poorly studied species. They compared the extent of genetic differentiation (mitochondrial DNA; mtDNA) between *G. gibbonsi* populations with members within the *pulchra* clade and between *Graptemys oculifera* and *Graptemys flavimaculata*. They found significant carapace pattern variation and morphological differentiation between the Pearl and Pascagoula river samples of *G. gibbonsi*. The mtDNA sequences showed greater genetic differentiation between *G. gibbonsi* samples from the Pearl and Pascagoula rivers than between two recognized and reciprocally sympatric species, *G. oculifera* (Pearl River) and *G. flavimaculata* (Pascagoula River), but revealed only a modest degree of differentiation when compared to other members of the *pulchra* clade. Based on the degree of differentiation in 1) morphology, 2) color patterns, and 3) mtDNA, in addition to their 4) allopatric distributions, the authors describe *Graptemys pearlensis* from the Pearl River, restricting the species *G. gibbonsi* to the Pascagoula River.

FLATBACK DIVING BEHAVIOR

M. Salmon et al. [2010, Chelonian Conservation and Biology 9(1):8-17] note that the flatback turtle (*Natator depressus*) is the only species of marine turtle that lacks an oceanic phase of development in its early life history. Instead, the turtles grow to maturity in shallow turbid shelf waters of tropical to subtropical Australia. The authors studied the development of diving behavior in neonate flatbacks to determine whether diving under those ecological conditions resulted in differences from leatherbacks (*Dermochelys coriacea*) and green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) at the same age when diving in clear, deep oceanic waters. Data were obtained from flatbacks that varied in both age (1–7 weeks) and mass (38–100 g). Each turtle towed a miniature time–depth tag during a single 30-minute trial in shallow (= 12 m) turbid shelf waters near Townsville, Queensland, Australia. In total, 192 dives were recorded from 22 turtles from 4 nests. Most dives were short (< 100 seconds) and shallow (< 4 m), but even young turtles could dive to the bottom. The most common flatback dives had V- or W-profiles, whereas, in leatherbacks, most dives were V-profiles, and, in green turtles, the dives were either V- or U-profiles. Routine flatback dives were accomplished by swimming slowly (like leatherbacks), but, when sufficiently motivated, flatbacks could swim faster (> 1 m/s) than green turtles. They could also make repeated deep dives after surfacing only briefly to replenish their oxygen supply. Changes in performance (longer, shallower dives) were correlated with increases in mass but not age. The authors hypothesize that, as neonates, flatback dives enable the turtles to 1) search efficiently for prey throughout the water column under conditions of limited visibility, 2) minimize surface time so that even in murky water the turtles can return to previously attractive locations, and 3) swim rapidly to evade their predators.

HABITAT SELECTION BY COMMON KINGSNAKES

D. A. Steen et al. [2010, Copeia 2010(2):227-231] note that the common kingsnake, *Lampropeltis getula*, is thought to be experiencing population declines in the southeastern portion of its geographic range. However, limited information exists regarding the natural history and habitat requirements of the species in this region. The authors conducted a radio-telemetry study to investigate habitat selection in *L. getula* at multiple scales in southwestern Georgia. At the home range scale, *L. getula* did not show habitat selection. However, at the study-area scale, *L. getula* selected for natural pine and hardwood forest types over other available habitats. At the microhabitat scale, *L. getula* were found in locations with more coarse woody debris and woody vegetation than random sites. *Lampropeltis getula* primarily used small mammal (*Peromyscus* spp.) burrows and stumpholes as below ground refuge sites. This study demonstrates that habitat selection of *L. getula* is complex and occurs at multiple scales.

HABITAT SELECTION BY THE TERCIOPELO

D. K. Wasko and M. Sasa [2010, Herpetologica 66(2):148-158] describe macro- and microhabitat use by the abundant pit viper *Bothrops asper* in the lowlands of Costa Rica. Radiotelemetry was used to monitor nine female and four male adult snakes at La Selva Biological Station between 2004 and 2006. The authors determined macrohabitat usage and availability on the basis of the movements of individual snakes and analyzed selection using compositional analysis. Microhabitat was quantified by a series of structural characteristics, and groups of locations were compared using multivariate ANOVA and discriminant function analysis. In the study, *B. asper* demonstrated a positive selection for swamp habitat and avoidance of human-disturbed areas by both male and female snakes. Microhabitat usage did not differ between males and females, but did differ for all individuals between daytime observations, when snakes were typically inactive, and nocturnal observations, when snakes moved to more exposed areas and foraged using ambush tactics. Microhabitat characteristics were significantly nonrandom at both times, suggesting that *B. asper* actively select particular sites for both diurnal retreat and nocturnal foraging sites. These data emphasize that the contrasting ways in which animals may utilize resources at separate times or for different activities should be considered in studies of overall habitat selection.

ARAKAN FOREST TURTLE CONSERVATION

S. G. Platt et al. [2010, Chelonian Conservation and Biology 9(1):114-119] note that the Arakan forest turtle (*Heosemys depressa*) is a critically endangered, poorly known chelonian endemic to western Myanmar. Surveys for *H. depressa* were conducted at the Rakhine Yoma Elephant Range in 2003 and 2009, and field observations are reported in this paper. This protected area offers excellent prospects for the future conservation of this endangered species owing to its large area, inaccessibility, and minimal human activity.

SHARP-TAILED SNAKE PREY PREFERENCES

R. E. Weaver and K. V. Kardong [2010, Northwestern Naturalist 91(1):58-62] note that the sharp-tailed snake (*Contia tenuis*) is a small (usually <30 cm total length), cryptic species found along the west coast of the United States and north into southwestern British Columbia. Because of its secretive nature, little is known about its behavioral ecology. The authors tested behavioral responses of 13 adult *C. tenuis* collected from a site in eastern Washington to potential invertebrate prey odors. Snakes were presented with 2 control odors (water, cologne) and 2 possible invertebrate prey odors (earthworm, slug). Overall, there was a significant difference in both the time-to-first-tongue flick (latency) and mean tongue flick rate (number of tongue flicks/60 s trial) for the odors tested. The mean latency period was 6.0 ± 1.87 s for earthworm and 4.1 ± 1.57 s for slug. The mean tongue flick rates for earthworm and slug were 13.8 ± 4.09 flicks/s and 39.7 ± 15.79 flicks/s, respectively. These results support prior claims of a preference for slugs by *C. tenuis*. This preference for slugs may also explain the presence of *C. tenuis* in areas of anthropogenic disturbances with an abundance of slugs.

PREDATION ON LEATHERBACK HATCHLINGS

P. S. Tomillo et al. [2010, Chelonian Conservation and Biology 9(1):18-25] surmise that the high probability of being depredated on the crawl to the water may have influenced the evolutionary processes of hatchling sea turtles on the beach. During this time hatchlings must locate water and move as quickly as possible in order to reduce the time spent on the beach. Hatchling leatherback turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*) at Playa Grande, Parque Nacional Marino Las Baulas, Costa Rica, spent on average 34 minutes visible on the beach, covered a distance of 46.8 m, and moved at a rate of 3.11 m/min. During the time on the beach, 12% of hatchlings were eaten by predators, 83% reached the water, and 5% were determined as potential mortalities (hatchlings were stuck on debris, vegetation, or upside down). The main predators of hatchling leatherbacks at Playa Grande were ghost crabs (*Ocypode occidentalis*), great blue herons (*Ardea herodias*), and yellow-crowned night herons (*Nycticorax violaceus*) during the night, and crested caracaras (*Caracara plancus*) during the day. Tracks left by the hatchlings on the sand were straighter as they approached the water. Dispersion (distance between the 2 outermost tracks coming from a nest) was correlated with number of hatchlings crawling. Hatchling leatherback turtles at Playa Grande are threatened by predation by domestic animals. Hatchling mortality due to human-related activities is likely to increase in the future due to increasing pressure from tourism at Parque Nacional Marino Las Baulas.

GOLDEN MANTELLA CONSERVATION

R. Randrianavelona et al. [2010, African J. Herpetology 59(1): 65-78] note that the golden mantella, *Mantella aurantiaca*, is a small, bright orange, terrestrial amphibian endemic to the island of Madagascar. The species has attracted significant attention from herpetologists and captive breeders but relatively little effort has been given to its conservation in the wild. The authors surveyed 33 reported breeding localities of the species to determine sites of conservation importance and aspects of habitat use and seasonality. A total of 471 *M. aurantiaca* were found in 26 different localities, all of which were characterized by intact or degraded humid forest on sloping ground alongside temporary lentic ponds in narrow valleys. Additional monitoring at a single site revealed that adult *M. aurantiaca* predominantly used the ponds and surrounding humid forest habitat during the austral summer and moved upslope at the beginning of the austral winter. Effective conservation for this species should therefore include measures to safeguard both forest and aquatic habitat features. Although 62% of localities occurred in sites with a positive conservation status (provisional protected areas or Ramsar sites), there is currently heavy pressure from artisanal mining, logging and agriculture in these areas. Because a further 15% of sites occur on land due to be impacted by mining and an additional 23% were at sites without any biodiversity management, the future of *M. aurantiaca* in the wild is precarious. A species conservation strategy is therefore needed to produce a cohesive plan for the future which aims to secure as many sites as possible for conservation.

OVERWINTERING CRICKET FROGS

D. L. Swanson and S. L. Burdick [2010, Copeia 2010(2):247-253] note that Blanchard's cricket frogs (*Acris crepitans blanchardi*) in the central portion of their range show minimal capacities for freezing tolerance and survive overwinter by using terrestrial hibernacula where they avoid freezing. However, frogs may exhibit greater freeze-tolerance capacity at high latitude range limits, where winter climate is more severe. The authors studied freezing tolerance, glucose mobilization during freezing, and hibernacula microclimates of cricket frogs in southeastern South Dakota, at the northwestern limit of their range. Cricket frogs from South Dakota generally survived freezing exposure at -1.5 to -2.5°C for 6-h periods (80% survival), but uniformly died when exposed to these same temperatures for 24-h freezing bouts. Hepatic glucose levels and phosphorylase a activities increased significantly during freezing, but hepatic glucose levels during freezing remained low, only reaching levels approximating those prior to freezing in freeze-tolerant species. Moreover, muscle glucose and hepatic glycogen levels did not vary with freezing, suggesting little mobilization of glucose from hepatic glycogen stores during freezing, contrasting with patterns in freeze-tolerant frogs. Temperatures in soil cracks and burrows potentially used for hibernacula were variable, with some sites remaining above the freezing point of the body fluids throughout the winter, some sites dropping below the freezing point for only short periods, and some sites dropping below the freezing point for extended periods. These data suggest that cricket frogs in South Dakota, as in other portions of their range, survive over winter by locating hibernacula that prevent freezing, although their toleration of short freezing bouts may expand the range of suitable hibernacula. These data also suggest that overwinter mortality may be high at the northern range boundary and might limit cricket frogs from expanding their range northward.

HAWKSBILL DIVING BEHAVIOR

R. G. van Brandis et al. [2010, Chelonian Conservation and Biology 9(1):26-32] recorded the diving behavior of immature hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) by means of direct in-water observations during a period of 8 months over 4 years on a coral reef at D'Arros Island in the Seychelles. For 4 turtles that had become habituated, detailed behavioral observations were recorded and quantified during 148 contact hours during which 187 turtle dives were documented. Mean dive depth and duration were 8.2 m and 27.4 minutes, respectively. Surfacing intervals lasted on average 81.5 seconds and the mean number of breaths was 6.6 per surface interval. Dive duration was positively correlated with dive depth. On average, larger turtles conducted longer dives than smaller turtles and spent more time at the surface. Immature hawksbills at D'Arros averaged longer surface intervals and took more breaths than did those reported at other sites. The authors attribute this, at least in part, to the increased energy demands required to excavate cryptic food items at D'Arros. Although average foraging dives in this and other studies tended to be shallow (< 15 m) and short (< 30 minutes), the turtles are capable of significantly deeper and longer dives. The authors propose that immature hawksbills forage well within their physiological dive limits and do not strive to maximize their bottom times.

FROGS OF THE IVORY COAST

P. J. Adeba et al. [2010, African J. Herpetology 59(1):1-16] investigated the anuran amphibian fauna of the Lamto region in Central, Côte d'Ivoire, 40 years after this fauna was assessed for the first time. During this period, the region lost about 90% of the forest cover, resulting in an overall change from a forest to a savanna-dominated landscape. Surprisingly, the overall species richness and composition of the amphibian fauna changed only little. Six species previously recorded from the area were not observed, but two more were added. A total of 40 amphibian species are now known from the savanna/forest mosaic of Lamto. Unfortunately, due to methodological differences, a quantitative comparison of the present and previous amphibian fauna was not possible. It is hence possible that the small qualitative changes in the amphibian fauna obscure more important quantitative ones; in particular the observation of decreasing numbers of *Phrynobatrachus* spp. and increasing numbers of *Arthroleptis* spp. hint on microclimate changes affecting the reproductive opportunities for these ecologically different frog groups.

PAINTED TURTLE NEST PREDATION

J. T. Strickland and F. J. Janzen [2010, Chelonian Conservation and Biology 9(1):131-135] report that anthropogenic factors can negatively impact wildlife populations, but deleterious effects may not be universal. They investigated the relationship between nest predation and spatial proximity to anthropogenic structures (campsites, trash bins, etc.) for 1375 painted turtle (*Chrysemys picta*) nests over 6 years for a population on the Mississippi River, Illinois. Although varying among years, the probability of nest predation increased with greater distance from anthropogenic structures over all years combined and did not differ between supplemental food attractant structures (e.g., fish cleaning table) and nonsupplemental food attractant structures (e.g., horseshoe pits).

SEA TURTLE NEST RELOCATION

J. Tuttle and D. Rostal [2010, Chelonian Conservation and Biology 9(1):1-7] attempted to determine the effects of short-distance nest relocation on nest parameters and embryonic development of loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*). The nesting biology of the loggerhead sea turtle was studied on Blackbeard Island National Wildlife Refuge in 2005 and 2006 during the nesting season. Research nests were randomly assigned 1 of 2 treatments (in situ or relocated). In situ nests (n = 35) were left in the original location, while relocated nests (n = 34) were moved above the spring high-tide line and into areas that were considered to have favorable nesting conditions. Data-loggers were placed in the center of nests to record the temperature during incubation. Incubation durations, nest temperatures, hatch success, and hatchling straight carapace lengths were compared for all research nests. The observed nests showed similar nest parameters and embryonic development regardless of nest treatment. Differences in nest parameters and embryonic development seemed to be driven by abiotic conditions of the nesting site. This study shows that nest relocation can be used to alleviate nests of extreme abiotic conditions to increase hatch success, without altering embryonic development.

Unofficial Minutes of the CHS Board Meeting, July 16, 2010

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 P.M. at the Schaumburg Public Library. Board members Jim Foster, Lawrence Huddleston, Deb Krohn and Cindy Rampacek were absent.

Officers' Reports

Recording Secretary: Cindy Rampacek was absent. The June minutes were read and accepted with corrections.

Treasurer: The financial report was presented, discussed and accepted.

Membership Secretary: Mike Dloogatch read a list of memberships expiring this month.

Vice-president: Rick Hoppenrath reported that speakers have been scheduled for the rest of the year.

Publications Secretary: Aaron LaForge reported that the speaker list on the website is current, and it should soon be possible to authorize others to update the list.

Sergeant-at-arms: Dick Buchholz reported 72 attendees at the June Show & Tell meeting.

Committee Reports

Shows (Jenny Vollman):
- SEWERfest, August 1, we will have a booth.
- Notebaert Members' Picnic, August 8
- Meet the Creek, Brookfield, September 18

Rich Crowley, Bob Bavirsha, Dick Buchholz, and Mike Scott exhibited at the Argonne National Laboratory picnic, and it went very well.

Old Business

Awards: Dick Buchholz will be working with the members-at-large on the 2010 awards.

ReptileFest: The date next year will be April 8–9. Admission fees will be raised to $10 for adults and $7 for children 3-11. Under 3 will still be free. Concerns about raising prices were discussed.

New Business

Emails: John Archer urged everyone to check email at least one or two times a week in case something important needs discussing between board meetings.

Insurance issues: There was a discussion regarding requirements for the CHS to appear at an event at the Museum of Science and Industry. The museum had requested that, in addition to the usual insurance requirements, we sign a letter written in legalese agreeing to terms that no one on the board really understood. A question was raised as to whether we should sign the letter, and a decision was made to ask if it could be waived. After the discussion, Rick Hoppenrath moved to do the event even if the letter was necessary. The motion passed with Rick, Mike Dloogatch, Aaron LaForge, Dick Buchholz and Jenny Vollman voting yes, and Linda and Andy Malawy voting no.

Mailing list: John got an email from a group asking to buy our mailing list. After a discussion, it was decided not to sell it.

Round Table

Jason Hood went to Peru, got engaged, and found a bushmaster! Or was that found a bushmaster and got engaged?

John Archer is now officially retired!

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Jenny Vollman for recording secretary Cindy Rampacek

Advertisements

For sale: rats and mice—pinkies, fuzzies and adults. Quantity discounts. Please send a SASE for pricelist or call Bill Brant, *THE GOURMET RODENT*, 12921 SW 1st Rd, Ste 107-434, Jonesville, FL 32669, 352-472-9189, E-mail: GrmtRodent@aol.com.

For sale: from **The Mouse Factory**, producing superior quality, frozen feeder mice and rats. Our mice and rats are vacuum-packed to greatly extend freezer life by reducing freezer burning and preserving vitamin and nutrient content. We feed our colony a nutrtionally balanced diet of rodent chow, formulated especially for us, and four types of natural whole grains and seeds. For a complete price list please visit our web site, www.themousefactory.com. We accept all major credit cards, PayPal or money orders. Call us **toll-free** (800) 720-0076 or send us an e-mail at info@themousefactory.com. Write us at PO Box 85, Alpine TX 79831.

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For sale: Rats—live or frozen. I breed rats for my collection of boas so only top quality lab chow and care will do, I'm now offering surplus animals for sale. Located in far south suburbs of Chicago. Only orders of 20 or more please, no large rats will be available. For current availability and prices, please e-mail Steve at smuys@sbcglobal.net.

For sale: herp books. *New Zealand Amphibians & Reptiles* by Joan Robb, 1980, 128 pp., 30 color plates with multi-photos on each, distribution maps, descriptions and natural history information, hardbound, $85; *The Taipan—The World's Most Dangerous Snake* by Paul Masci and Philip Kendall, 1995, 90 pp., many color and b&w photos, tables, comprehensive treatment including snakebite case histories and biology, softbound, $52; *Lizards of Western Australia, Vol. 1—Skinks* by G. M. Storr, L. A. Smith and R. E. Johnstone, 1981, 200 pp., 20 plates with 6–8 color photos each, drawings, range maps, keys, description, derivation of scientific name, softbound—$35; *Lizards of Western Australia, Vol. 2—Dragons and Monitors* by Storr, Smith and Johnstone, 1983, 113 pp., 20 plates with 2–8 color photos each, drawings, range maps, keys, description, derivation of scientific name, softbound—$35. Books in excellent condition, sent postpaid. William Turner, 7395 S. Downing Circle W., Centennial, CO 80122. Telephone: (303) 795-5128; e-mail: toursbyturner@aol.com

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ReptileFest 2011, April 9, 10

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Chicago Herpetological Society will be held at 7:30 P.M., Wednesday, August 25, at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, Cannon Drive and Fullerton Parkway, in Chicago. Field biologist and environmental educator **George L. Heinrich**, of St. Petersburg, Florida, will speak about "Florida Turtles: Conservation Challenges and Opportunities."

Speaking at the September29 meeting will be **Drs. Stephen L. Barten and Gery Herrmann**. Both Steve and Gery are veterinarians, both are longtime CHS members, and both have been enthusiastic field herpers all their lives. Their program will deal with the herps and other creatures they encountered on their recent trip to mainland Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands.

The regular monthly meetings of the Chicago Herpetological Society take place at Chicago's newest museum—the **Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum**. This beautiful building is at Fullerton Parkway and Cannon Drive, directly across Fullerton from the Lincoln Park Zoo. Meetings are held the last Wednesday of each month, from 7:30 P.M. through 9:30 P.M. Parking is free on Cannon Drive. Many CTA bus routes are within walking distance.

Board of Directors Meeting

Are you interested in how the decisions are made that determine how the Chicago Herpetological Society runs? And would you like to have input into those decisions? If so, mark your calendar for the next board meeting, to be held at 7:30 P.M., September 17, in the Rasmussen Room North on the second floor of the Schaumburg Township District Library, 130 S. Roselle Road, Schaumburg.

The Chicago Turtle Club

The monthly meetings of the Chicago Turtle Club are informal; questions, children and animals are welcome. Meetings normally take place at the North Park Village Nature Center, 5801 N. Pulaski, in Chicago. Parking is free. For more info visit the CTC website: http://chicagoturtle.org/.

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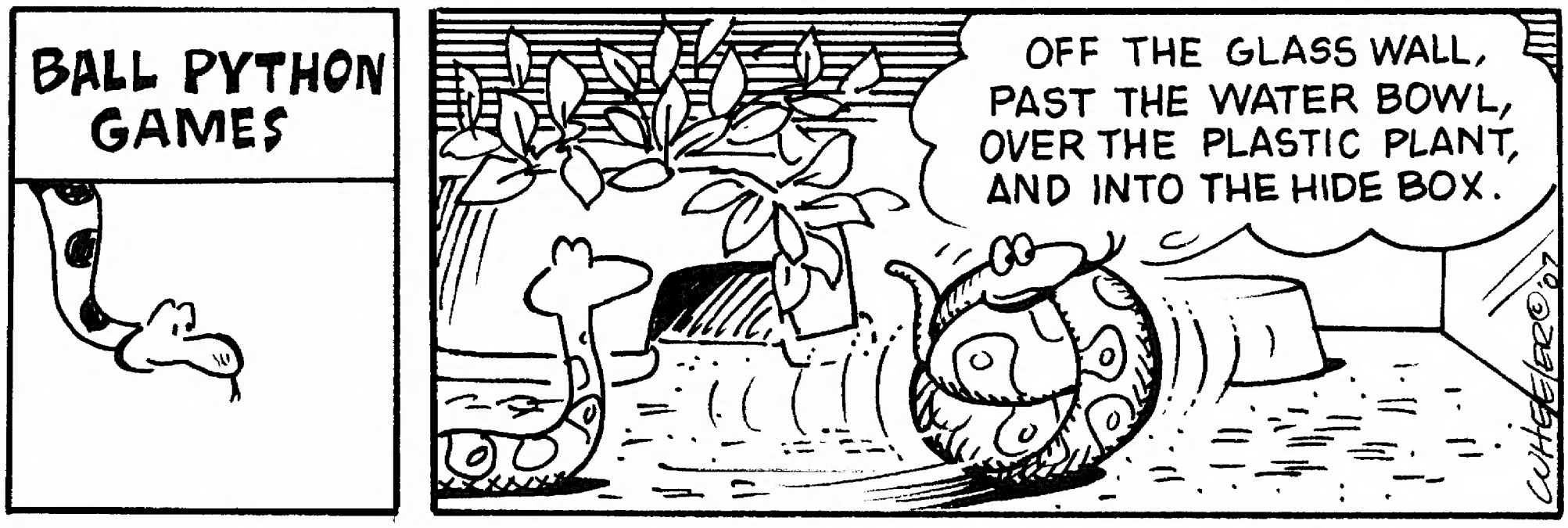

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